

for the office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs for the New Jersey Department of Insurance.

Verice was extremely involved in her community. She was previously active in the Metuchen-Edison Branch of the NAACP and received the NAACP Honorable Barbara Jordan Community Activist Award. She served as both treasurer and co-president of the Metuchen Parent-Teacher Council and treasurer of the Citizens for Quality Education. She was a trustee of the Metuchen Education Foundation. She was also a member of the Second Baptist Church of Metuchen.

I first met Verice Mason at Case Western Reserve University in the early 1970's. I was a house mother and she was a student. She had a wonderful zest for life. We were both active in the African American Society and she was very instrumental in helping other black students adjust to life on a predominantly white college campus. She and her college roommate Joan Brooks set a loving example of sisterhood that we all strived to emulate.

On behalf of the Congress of the United States and the people of the 11th Congressional District of Ohio, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Verice Mason including her husband Mark, two sons Matthew and Mark and her father Matthew. May her legacy of love live on in our hearts.

**INCLUDING ALL BANKING AGENCIES WITHIN THE EXISTING REGULATORY AUTHORITY UNDER THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ACT**

**HON. JOHN D. DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 6, 2007*

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and am proud to join my colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts and Chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, Rep. FRANK, in sponsoring this bill. It represents an important first step in improving the protection of consumers of depository institutions. H.R. 3526 was referred to both of our Committees (Energy and Commerce has Rule X jurisdiction over consumer protection and consumer affairs) and reported unanimously by both. I urge its adoption by the House.

The Supreme Court's ruling earlier this year in *Watters v. Wachovia Bank N.A.* upheld a regulation by the Department of Treasury's Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) that permits operating subsidiaries of national banks to violate State laws with impunity. The Court ruled that the bank's operating subsidiary is subject to OCC superintendence, even if there effectively is none, and not the licensing, reporting, and visitorial regimes of the States in which the subsidiary operates. The practical effect of the OCC's far-reaching preemption authority as interpreted and blessed by the courts is that it prevents States from using their historical authority to protect consumers and communities in large parts of the financial services marketplace, a huge consumer protection gap that evildoers have exploited and the Federal banking regulators have not shown an inclination or an ability to fill.

As explained more fully in our respective Committee reports, banks are covered by the Federal Trade Commission Act's prohibition against "unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce," but the rule writer for them is not the Federal Trade Commission, the expert agency who implements and enforces this provision across the vast majority of the U.S. economy, but rather the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve. It has done very little. Given the tide of complaints about abusive practices with respect to loans, credit cards, checking accounts, and other products, this is clearly unacceptable. H.R. 3526 therefore includes all Federal banking regulators, and not just the Federal Reserve, within the existing mandate under Section 18(f) of the FTC Act to adopt rules identifying and prohibiting unfair or deceptive acts or practices by depository institutions.

The Committee on Energy and Commerce was pleased to adopt improvements to this legislation. We amended it to require the banking regulators to consult with the FTC when promulgating any such rules, to allow the FTC to use the notice and comment procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act in concurrent rulemakings with the bank regulators, and to require GAO to report on the status of bank rules under these authorities.

I want to assure Members that the Committee on Energy and Commerce and its Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection intend to engage in vigorous oversight, in consultation with the Committee on Financial Services, to make sure that this authority is aggressively used. The public will greatly benefit from it.

**CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF FRANCES MURPHY II**

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 6, 2007*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to ask the House of Representatives to join the residents of the District of Columbia and thousands of Americans throughout the country in thanksgiving for the life of Frances Murphy II. The influential Publisher Emeritus of the Washington Afro-American newspaper was especially revered in this city and in her hometown of Baltimore, where the Baltimore Afro-American is published, for coverage that African Americans got nowhere else in the press. Frances Murphy's leadership in journalism and publishing and her decades of work as a reporter, columnist, and editor were instrumental in educating and raising the consciousness of African Americans through unflinching investigations and coverage on matters of race that furthered the determination of people of all races to struggle against racial discrimination. As fearless as she was able, Frances Murphy was the scion of the nation's most distinguished African American newspaper family, but she insisted on making it to the top the hard way. Ms. Murphy rose to the pinnacle of running the family business, but only after selling the Afro as a child and submitting pieces for its children's section, educating herself at one of the nation's finest schools of journalism, becoming an entry-level reporter and then learning the business first hand by per-

forming every function until she ran the papers. It would be unusual for a woman to become head of a newspaper empire today, but Frances Murphy's rise as a pre-feminist pioneer was all the more remarkable. Throughout her long and storied career, Ms. Murphy became a life long learner, pursuing additional degrees and always educating herself. In the process, she applied the same standard to the public by insisting on educating all of us. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the remarkable life of Frances Murphy II.

**RECOGNIZING PRINCIPAL DWIGHT WAGNER**

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 6, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to honor Port Arthur elementary school Principal Dwight Wagner, recent recipient of Port Arthur News' Citizen of the Year Award. The award was given to a man that has spent his entire life displaying excellence and commitment to community. For over 30 years, Mr. Wagner has been employed with the Port Arthur Independent School District, serving as a teacher and an administrator.

Principal Wagner is a Port Arthur native who has spent a lifetime giving back to his community. After graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees right down the street at Lamar University.

His honors are numerous, including Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year Award, NAACP Amos Evans Service Award, and the Sertoma Organization's Service to Mankind Award.

Known throughout his community for his musical ability, Principal Wagner composed the official city song of Port Arthur, "City by the Sea." His vocal talents provide entertainment at numerous community events and various local stage performances.

On behalf of the entire Second Congressional District of Texas, I would like to congratulate Principal Wagner on his latest award and thank him for his many years of service to the Port Arthur Community.

And that's just the way it is.

**COMMENDING THE CITY OF PRICHARD, ALABAMA, AND ITS MAYOR RON DAVIS**

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 6, 2007*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the city of Prichard, Alabama, its mayor, Ron Davis, and the city council for successfully eliminating the city's debt.

On November 9, 2007, Mayor Davis signed two checks at a ceremony at the A.J. Cooper Municipal Complex, officially paying off the city's creditors a full year ahead of schedule. As Mayor Davis stated while signing these checks, the city of Prichard is now open for business—business that includes the Dale Earnhardt, Jr. Alabama Motorsports Park and theme park, which will feature stock car racing, drag racing, and a road course.